

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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Tkvarcholi Coal Mines

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1. The Tkvarcholi (42°52'N, 41°47'E) coal mines lie 12 km north of the town of Kvezani. From Kvezani a two-lane asphalt highway in excellent condition runs to the mines, which are at the terminus of the road.
2. In October 1943, German, Hungarian, Yugoslav, and Austrian PWs were brought to the mines; most of the PWs were Germans. They were given the task of opening a new gallery. Until 1943, two galleries had been worked, each of which was 2,000-2,500 meters in length. Work on the new gallery was irregular because of various shortages. There was a great shortage of skilled workers for the mines. The management tried to get the work done in any way possible. Unskilled workmen were often assigned to tasks requiring a high degree of skill. Men from 14 to 60 years of age were employed. Work went on 24 hours a day in three shifts.

3. It is taken from the mine to a plant in Kvezani, where it is cleaned. From there it is shipped by railroad The quality of the coal is excellent. Electricity from the hydro-electric station in Kvezani is used for power in all the operations of the coal mine. The aerial railway on which the coal is carried from the mine to the Kvezani plant, the shops, the workers' quarters, the offices, and all the surface operations use electric power. The underground operations, however, do not use this electric power. Special lamps are used by the miners, and the cars used to transport coal within the galleries are moved with "autocars" (sic).

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4. there are three underground galleries. No. 1 and No. 2 have been in operation for a long time. No. 3 gallery was begun before the war, but until 1943 work had gone very slowly. In 1943, progress was more regular and systematic after the PWs were brought to the mine. Galleries No. 1 and No. 2 have about the same construction and the same length. No. 2, however, has been worked less and consequently is richer in coal. The quality of the coal is the same in the two galleries.

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5. Construction of Gallery No. 1

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- a. The length of the gallery is 2,000-2,500 meters. The width is 4-8 meters, and the height is 2.5-3.5 meters.
- b. The ceiling of the gallery is supported on beams; but in spite of these beams it fell in many times, with fatal results. The ceiling also fell in No. 2 gallery, but this was caused by the fact that the workmen employed there were not skilled.
- c. There is a double railroad track going into gallery No. 1. Material is transported on cars moved by electric "autocars".

- d. There are two entrances into gallery No. 1. [redacted] The workmen enter [redacted] where there is an electric lift with a capacity of 12-15 men. The depth of the workmen's entrance is about 15 meters.

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- e. From entrance No. 4 to entrance No. 5 the gallery is lighted by electricity. From entrance No. 5 to the end of the gallery the passage is lighted with special lamps of Russian manufacture.
- f. The tracks for cars are numbered; that on the right as one enters is called Number 1, and that on the left Number 2.

- g. [redacted] each "autocar" can pull three to five loaded cars.

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[redacted] Shed [redacted] was used to store and to repair them. This shed was built of planks and was located a short distance from the entrance of the gallery.

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- h. [redacted] veins of coal [redacted] were exploited on only a small scale because the coal was not clean.

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- i. [redacted] a shed called "konochnaya ploshchadka kanatika" (cable terminal ?) [redacted] is about 15 meters long. Here, [redacted] the coal is unloaded directly from the cars emerging from the gallery into the cars of the aerial car line. [redacted] the aerial car line begins, which goes to Kvezani and has a total length of 12 kilometers.

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- j. [redacted] two-track railway for "autocars" leading into the gallery.

k. [redacted]

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- l. [redacted] a large four-story building made of bricks. This houses the offices of the trust which direct the work in gallery No. 1 and the other work connected with the mine. The general manager of these offices is Huntua, who is a Georgian. The assistant manager is Sioniya, also a Georgian.

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1.

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2.

a two-story building used as a club by the upper class employees of the mine and by the personnel of the MVD. It was also used for propaganda meetings. There were showings of films from time to time in this club.

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3.

three-and four-story buildings are only partly used. They are not used by the workers.

aa.

a two-lane bridge about 20-25 meters long was constructed about the end of 1943. The distance from the paving of the bridge to the surface of the water is about 4 meters. The river always has an abundance of water. The bridge has concrete piers and abutments. Its steel beams are joined by a network of cables, each with a thickness of 5 cm. On top of the wire network are two series of crossed logs (with a diameter of ca. 25-30 cm.). On top of the logs there is planking covered with asphalt. The bridge has a wooden railing on each side about one meter high.

Destruction of the bridge would cut off communication between town and mine, and the only means of transporting the coal would be the aerial car line. The distance of bridge from the road junction is about four kilometers.

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bb.

steel bridge about 10-15 meters long. It is wide enough for two lanes. This bridge is supported on two concrete abutments. The construction of this bridge is about the same as the preceding, except that the logs are laid directly on the steel beams rather than on a wire network.

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cc.

a small concrete bridge about 5 meters in length. It also has two lanes and is paved with asphalt. It crosses a small stream.

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6. [redacted] the Yugoslav PWs who had been working in the mines since 1945 had been ordered by Moscow to return to their own country.

Tula Coal Mines

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7. The coal mines in the Tula area are identifiable by numbers. Both PWs and civilian internees are employed in them. Some of the pits reach a depth of 70 meters.
8. In Mine No. 26, one hundred PWs and one hundred civilian internees are employed on each of the three eight-hour shifts. The mine is approximately 50 meters deep and the coal mined is of a type described as a cross between brown and hard coal (young coal). All underground work is done by hand although the hoisting gear is electrically driven. Railway lines run to the pithead and coal is loaded onto the cars by hand or by small cranes.

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